REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In order to more clearly define the invention, Applicants have amended the claims as indicated above. Support for the amendments is found throughout the original application; no new matter has been added. Specific examples of the support are provided below.

Claim 1:

(1-1) The expression "plant-cultivating system comprising:

a container having a shape capable of receiving a plant to be cultivated" is supported by the following passages in the specification:

> "according to the system of the present invention" (page 7, lines 30 to 31) (emphasis added), and
>
> ". . . the solution 6 disposed in a solution container 5" (page 13, lines 27 to 28 of the specification) (emphasis added) (note: The "container 5" is shown in Fig. 1 of the application).

(1-2) The expression "aqueous fertilizer solution" is supported by the following passage in the specification:

> "In this embodiment, the fertilizer solution is covered with the film, and the evaporation of water is carried out mainly through the plant so that the direct evaporation from the surface of the aqueous solution can be prevented by the film." (page 30, lines 4 to 8)(emphasis added).

(1-3) The expression "non-porous hydrophilic film for cultivating a plant thereon" is supported by the following passage in the specification:

> "(Non-Porous Hydrophilic Film and Porous Hydrophobic Film) . . . On the other

> hand, according to the discovery by the present inventor, water and ions as a fertilizer component can easily enter the inside of the latter non-porous type. In this regard, (2) the non-porous type is more suited for the system of the present invention than (1) the porous type." (page 21, lines 10 to 26) (emphasis added)

(1-4) For specifying the arrangement of the "non-porous hydrophilic film" in the system of the present invention, the expression "said non-porous hydrophilic film being placed on said aqueous fertilizer solution in a manner such that . . ." is supported by the drawings of the application, for example, by Fig. 5, and by an explanation thereof at page 29, line 33 to page 30, line 8 of the application, which reads as follows:

> "Referring to a schematic sectional view of Fig. 5, a film and a solution are in the direct contact in this embodiment . . .".

Claim 2

The limitation on the salt concentration (0.5 % by weight) of the saline solution supported at page 80, lines 4 to 6 of the specification.

Claim 3

The limitation on the glucose concentration (5 % by weight) of the glucose solution is supported at page 17, lines 33 to 34 of the specification.

Claim 4

This claim has been amended merely for better expression.

Claim 5:

The limitation "water pressure resistance" is measured in accordance with "JIS L1092 (method B)" is supported at page 61, lines 11 to 12 of the specification.

Claim 6:

The limitation on the "integration strength" (10 g or more) is supported by the following passages in the specification:

> "According to the present invention, as described above, the integration of a film and a plant root can be evaluated by the magnitude of the load required for peeling the root from the film to which the root is closely attached" (page 19, lines 4 to 8)(emphasis added); and
>
> "According to the present invention, with regard to the peeling strength thus measured, a film that exhibits a peeling strength of 10 g or more with respect to the root of the plant can preferably be used" (page 18, lines 34 to 37) (emphasis added).

Claim 7:

(7-1) The "device" recited in this claim has been changed to the "system" as described in amended claim 1.

(7-2) Further, the step for cultivating a plant "while allowing the aqueous fertilizer solution to be contacted with the plant through the film while allowing roots of the plant to grow on and get integrated with the film" is supported by the following passage in the specification:

> "In the cultivation method of the present invention, the developed root of a plant, after being integrated with the above film, can absorb a fertilizer component from the liquid in contact therewith through the film" (page 24, lines 10 to 14) (emphasis added).

Claim 8:

Claim 8 has been amended merely for better expression and for consistency of terminology with instantly amended claim 1.

Claim 9:

Claim 9 has been cancelled.

Claim 10:

Claim 10 has been amended for consistency of terminology with amended claim 1, and the dependency of this claim (originally, dependent from claim 9) has been changed in accordance with the cancellation of claim 9.

Claim 11:

Claim 11 has been amended merely for consistency of terminology with instantly amended claim 1. Further, the term "about" has been deleted.

Claim 12:

Claim 12 has been amended for consistency of terminology with instantly amended claim 1. Further, the expression "film of another material" has been changed to read "porous film". This amendment is supported by the following passage in the specification:

> "If desired, the above film 4 may be complexed (for example, laminated) with another material . . . . . Even if a common porous material (for example, unwoven fabric), a water-permeable and/or an ion-permeable material, etc. is disposed outside of the film 4 (i.e. at the solution side of the film 4) when viewed from the plant body, the effect of the film 4 may not substantially be affected in most cases." (page 19, line 31 to page 20, line 7) (emphasis added)

Claim 13:

Claim 13 (dependent from claim 12) has been amended for better expression and for consistency of terminology with instantly amended claim 12.

Claims 14 and 15:

Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled.

Applicants submit that the amended claims distinguish over the art and are allowable. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP

By _____

John D. Carpenter
Reg. No. 34,133
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